



State of Wisconsin
Department of Public Instruction
Elizabeth Burmaster, State Superintendent

*****NEWS RELEASE*****

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CONTACT: Patrick Gasper, Communications Officer, (608) 266-3559

Three Wisconsin students best in Braille

MADISON—Students from Kenosha, Green Bay, and Madison are among the top Braille users in the United States and Canada, winning a competition held at the Wisconsin Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired in Janesville, as a part of the International Braille Challenge.

The winners, **Baylee Alger** of Green Bay, **Zachary Morris** of Kenosha, and **Amelia King** of Madison, competed in reading comprehension, proofreading, spelling, dictation, and charts and graphs events as part of the challenge. Alger and Morris won top honors in the apprentice category for students in the first and second grades. Both attend their local school districts and receive Braille instruction from teachers of the blind: Alger from Kathleen Ford and Morris from Harry Ostrov. King has placed as a finalist twice before and won the competition in 2004. She currently attends the Wisconsin School for the Visually Handicapped in Janesville and has been a student at Madison Memorial High School.

Seventeen students ranging from second grade to high school seniors took part in the event on March 13. Winners were announced in early May by the Braille Institute of America in Los Angeles. The challenge, held since 2003 at the Janesville facility, is part of a competition in the United States and Canada to find the best Braille-using students in North America. Braille is a system of raised dots, three dots high and two dots wide, used by the blind for reading and writing.

“Braille is one of the most important skills for children who are blind or visually impaired to learn,” said State Superintendent Elizabeth Burmaster. “They use their reading and writing skills throughout their lives. We are excited that our students do so well. This demonstrates not only the ability of our students, but the support they receive from their parents and the quality of the state’s teachers of the blind and visually impaired.”

The three Wisconsin winners are eligible to attend the finals of the International Braille Challenge, which will be held in Los Angeles on June 27th. Students will compete with their age groups

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on their knowledge of and ability to write Braille. The winners receive savings bonds and adaptive equipment from challenge sponsors.

The Wisconsin Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired is located at 1700 West State Street, Janesville. The center and the Wisconsin School for the Visually Handicapped are part of the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction. The center and school provide educational services throughout the state to children who are blind or visually impaired. Additional information is available from Dan Wenzel, director of the Wisconsin Center, (608) 758-6152, or dan.wenzel@wcbvi.k12.wi.us.

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